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Twelve months with General Buller in Sou

TWELVE MONTHS WITH GENERAL BULLER IN SOUTH AFRICA.

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LONDON.

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TWELVE MONTHS

WITH

GENERAL BULLER

IN

SOUTH AFRICA.

London:

PRINTED & PUBLISHED BY

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DEDICATED

TO THE

BRAVE MEN OF THE LADYSMITH RELIEF COLUMN

WHO FELL AT

COLENSO, VAL KRANTZ, SPION KOP AND PIETER'S HILL.

"Side by side, they fought and died,
Each man beside his pal,
Fighting for England's Glory,
On the borders of Natal."

Camp Song.

BY

A MEMBER OF THE

H. A. C.

WHO DEEMED IT AN HONOUR TO SERVE IN THE

SOUTH AFRICAN LIGHT HORSE

AS

A TROOPER OF THE EMPRESS.

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PREFACE.

THE appearance of this little work in print is due to the solicitations of my friends. Having no desire to pose as a litterateur, I humbly ask possible critics to be merciful.

With one or two exceptions, the facts herein related came under my own observation, but I may have erred as to the exact dates thereof. Of the hardships of the campaign I make but little mention, as they were common to every soldier of the Queen.

The cosmopolitan character of the Light Horse is well illustrated by the following lines from "Hudibras":—

> "The numerous rabble were drawn out
> Of several counties round about,
> From villages remote, and shires,
> Of east and western hemispheres,
> From foreign parishes, and regions
> Of different manners, speech, religions."

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MY DIARY.

1899.—Nov. 12.

Landed in Cape Town. Went to see H—— C—— out at Woodstock, re joining some irregular corps. Met E—— R——, who advised me to get attached to South African Light Horse, then being raised at Rosebank. Report is current that Dutch have blown up railway below Colenso.

Nov. 13.

Have been attached to South African Light Horse, and have been putting some recruits through what little drill I remember, and also shown them how to pitch tents, aided by one of the squad, who knows far more about it than I do.

Everyone wants to know what H.A.C. means. I am wearing a field service cap with the regimental initials upon it.

Nov. 14,

Visited the "Pekin." It is clearly "a den of iniquity," and no place for me. Drink is vile, and the women and sharps worse, and, to crown all, the latter tell us they are going to join the Light Horse. The Boers are reported to be around Estcourt (Natal), and things are looking black in that Colony.

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Coming home from our visit to the Pekin, we get embroiled in a row with some Malays and half-castes. Three of our men have to go into hospital suffering from severe wounds caused by missile beer bottles.

Nov. 15.

The latest camp yarn is that the Light Horse are bound for Natal.

Dined at an awful show, guided by a stalwart Light Horse corporal, who was at one time in the Highland Light Infantry, but who was evidently at home in Cape Town.

An armoured train has been captured in Natal; some of the Dublins and Colonials were captured. Armoured trains don't seem to pay, as the Dutch seem to have some ripping good guns.

Nov. 16.

Went to Claremont Baths and had a swim. It was full of Light Horse, some of whom were in urgent need of a wash.

Hear that the Boers have completely cut off Ladysmith, and are vigorously shelling the town. Have had a row with my C.O., and have gone into the ranks.

Nov. 17.

We are off to the front in a few days.

Nov. 18.

Beastly hot to-day. Had eight hours' drill, with intervals for beer.

Nov. 19.

A squadron were fully equipped to-day. Horses and recruits are arriving every hour.

Nov. 20.

B and C squadrons ready for the front.

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Nov. 21,

A leaves to-day for Victoria West, and we all turn out to give them a rousing send off. They looked fit for any amount of hard work.

Nov, 22.

As regards recruits, the cry is "still they come." B, C, and D squadrons leave for Durban on board the troopship Jamaica. I am sorry to say Cape Town did not think us worthy of a decent cheer. Probably they are glad to get rid of some who have joined our ranks.

Nov. 23.

I am appointed orderly for No. 1 troop, D squadron, and we certainly are the best troop of the four. I have fourteen sea-sick bounders, whom I try to tempt with preserved "spuds."

Nov. 26.

Upon our arrival at Durban, I in company with ten others, are given ball cartridge, and, being placed in iron trucks, sent to the front, acting as advance guard to the rest of the regiment. The behaviour of the Natal colonists towards us was splendid. Every wayside station was crowded with women and girls, the greater number of whom wore Union Jack rosettes, who one and all strove to anticipate our wants in the way of eatables and drinkables. Every house in view from the railway seemed alive with patriotic womenfolk, who cheered us from every coign of vantage. The men were conspicuous by their absence "at the front."

One of our advanced party having publicly announced his intention of deserting at the first opportunity, I am detailed to guard him, my instructions being, "Don't hesitate to shoot."

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Eventually I hand my prisoner over to the Sgt. of the guard at Maritzburg.

Our stay in Maritzburg was of short duration; ere six hours had elapsed we were en route for Hilton Road.

HILTON ROAD CAMP.

During our stay here our duties have been of a very practical nature, riding and rifle practice being the order of the day; whilst a sudden order to strike camp has been issued at least half a dozen times. Here our mounts arrive.

I, being on guard, depute Jack O'Brien and Dick Nielson to secure a mount for me, and a wiry, vicious, Basuto pony is the result.

The aforesaid pony and I have many differences of opinion, which cause much laughter among my comrades.

Dec. 7.

FRERE CAMP.

We arrived here to-day, having marched from Estcourt. My kit has evidently fallen off the truck somewhere between Hilton Road (our last camp) and Estcourt, as it was "non est" when our baggage was off-loaded.

There are about 20,000 men encamped here, and another 10,000 are expected. Everyone up here tells us we look "good enough." Hope it's not flattery. General Buller's birthday.

Dec. 8.

Range-finding practice to-day. The atmosphere is very deceptive, but I do fairly well.

Dec. 9.

We have manual and firing exercise to-day. To my disgust, I am hauled from the ranks to illustrate the

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prone position for the education of my troop. Lieut. —— is a tyro, and knows it not.

Frere railway bridge was completed to-day, and an early advance is now possible.

Two nights ago, we are told, the Ladysmith chaps made a sortie, and blew up the Boer guns. More power to Sir George and his men.

Dec. 10.

The game has begun to-day. We were fired upon from a donga, but luckily no one was hit. I fired forty-six rounds.

We were scouting round Chieveley Station.

Dec. 11.

Patrol to-day. All quiet.

Dec. 12.

General advance to-day. Only slight opposition to our advanced scouts. Niggers report that the enemy are busily engaged in digging trenches at Colenso, and have been doing so for a long time. We camp about six miles or so from the river. I manage to commandeer a fowl for supper, and invite Jack O'Brien and Mary Ann to the feast.

Dec. 13.

The naval guns shelled the Colenso trenches to-day. The stalwart A.B. in charge of the telescope says they made good shooting.

We scout towards the Tugela, but the Dutch, like "brer rabbit," "lay low," and we returned to camp with precious little information. The shells from the 4.7 had a very vicious sound as they whistled over our heads.

Dec, 14.

Did nothing all day. We must have quite 30,000 men here, and a pretty big fight seems likely to take place in the near future.

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Dec. 15.

The big fight has come off, and we've been licked; but everyone is very cheerful, and confidence in Buller is still to be found in every soldier.

We were kicked out of bed about 3 a.m., got our breakfast, and then saddled up and moved out of camp, passing through Chieveley Station, thus making a slight rearward detour; we worked our way towards the Dutch left.

We halted, roughly speaking, about 4,000 yards from Hlangwani mountain, waiting for two guns which were with our brigade to come up.

On the guns coming up, we cantered quickly towards the Boer position. When about 1,800 yards from Hlangwani, we struck a deep and wide donga. We quickly dismounted, and led our horses down into the cover, handing them over to the No. 3's.

We then formed up, and were about to extend, when a volley from the enemy's extreme left crashed into us. "No one hit!" was the word, and before our friends the enemy could give us another, Thorneycroft's and the King's Royal Rifles Mounted Infantry, who were on our right, were keeping them engaged, and throughout the whole day kept us from being outflanked.

Our fellows advanced in little rushes, then, lying prone, put in a few volleys and independent at the trenches and scrub in our front.

Meanwhile, the infantry had joined the battle in the centre, and the combined British and Boer rifle fire made a most infernal roar. Away to our left the Dutch had a strange and wonderful gun. What it was we didn't know; but, pom-pom-pom-pom it roared all day, and Tommy at once christened it the "pom-pom."

Far away in the rear one could hear our Naval boys

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letting loose lyddite galore, and on our left front the Dutch big guns boomed suddenly in reply.

The Light Horse were meanwhile advancing steadily, losing but few men. Those who fell we were obliged to leave untended. The bullets rained about us like hail. When about 500 yards from the foot-hills, word was passed that the infantry were in Colenso village, and the Dublins had crossed the Tugela, and were attacking the trenches on the further side.

The two field guns attached to our brigade had been doing grand work, and at times fairly shut up the Dutch riflemen, and under their fire we continued to advance, pouring in a hot fire at the scrub, and especially at a kraal on our right front, whence bullets were coming with swiftness and precision. We fired at where we thought the enemy to be, for seldom did we see a moving object; occasionally a man would make a bolt from a trench, only to disappear, like a rabbit, in one higher up.

At this juncture the King's Royal Rifles Mounted Infantry, who were on our right, began to retire, and their officer shouted as he passed us, "Light Horse, retire!" Some of our men got up and went slowly back, myself among them. The bush sheltered us, and we had no losses.

On arriving at the donga which sheltered our horses, to our surprise we found the regiment had not retired. Back we went again, and ten minutes later I found myself and Lieut. Warren—who was looking after a wounded man—in a hole about 20ft. square, which made an excellent trench. We were shortly joined by four others, and for two more solid hours we lay there, firing steadily at apparently empty trenches.

Suddenly I heard a bugle call sound in our rear.

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Then, after a considerable interval, another—and another. No one seemed to take any notice, and Lieut. Warren said it probably was the infantry about to advance. Shortly afterwards I chanced to look back towards our horses, and saw a man running towards us. As he got nearer I made him out to be Cameron, a Behar Light Horseman, who had been attached to us at Hilton Road Camp. He was having a lively time, as bullets were kicking up the dust all round him. Still, unhurt, he reached our Colonel, gave a message, and then turned and ran back, accompanied by the same leaden hail. As he safely reached the horses, we got the order, "Retire steadily, by sections!" Then began from the enemy's trenches a most infernal rifle fire, and our poor fellows began to fall fast. Two men in front of me were bearing a wounded comrade, when one fell shot through the head. Mechanically I took his place, slinging my rifle, and together we managed to get him safely into the donga.

As the men got back to shelter, we formed up, and "stood to our horses."

At this juncture Captain G—— came up, and, crossing over to where the Colonel stood on the donga bank, said: "Do you know where my squadron is, Colonel?"

"You," replied Col. Byng, "should know best; go back and find it." Captain G—— departed, and managed to find two troops, and I suppose took it for granted that the other two had retired "on their own."

The order was now given to retire mounted, by troops. No sooner had the leading troop got beyond the shelter of the donga, than it was greeted by rifle fire from almost all sides, and again men dropped fast. The range must have been quite 1,500 yards. Eventu-

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ally we all got out, D 1 being the last troop to leave. The last man to leave was Dick Neilson, who kindly held my stirrup, under the impression that I was wounded. As we rode up the hill, O'Hara, who was riding next me, called out, "Oh, I'm hit!" and reeled in his saddle. He rode on for about 200 yards, when two of us dismounted, and, lifting him off his horse, examined his wound. Shot through the body, below his belt-bandolier. We bandaged him up, and my comrade went for the stretcher, while I stayed by the wounded man, who, shortly afterwards, was placed under our doctor's care.

Riding back to rejoin the regiment, with O'Hara's horse, Captain G—— met me, and said: "Will you ride back with me, taking your led horse, to two troops of mine whose horses have been shot?"

In company with ten or fifteen others we cantered slowly back towards the Dutch lines.

We had got within 200 yards of the cover wherein the unhorsed men had taken refuge, when we were greeted by several volleys from the enemy.

My led horse went down, as did several others, and as the fire got hotter, Captain G—— sang out, "ride clear!" or "get clear!" and then fell headlong off his horse. Someone, dismounting, examined him, and "He's gone!" was the verdict.

We then rode away and left our comrades—unwillingly, I'll own—to their fate.

Our two 15-pounder guns had meanwhile gone to assist those under Col. Long, who was massing his artillery in our centre.

As I was riding to rejoin the regiment, a staff officer stopped me, and said: "Can you catch those two guns and bring them back?" I tried, but failed, my little pony being tired out.

How the Dublins, Inniskillings, E. Surreys, and

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other regiments fought and died, how we lost our guns, the whole world knows.

Dec. 16.

Our losses yesterday were 1,147 killed, wounded, and missing. Marvellous have been the escapes. Sgt. Mitchel, of D squadron, had the collar of his tunic ripped twice; another bullet hit his belt-bandolier, bent three cartridges, went through his haversack, and wounded a man next him. Major Fraser had his cheek grazed. Col. Byng had a bullet through his belt. Our regimental losses are 60 killed, wounded, and missing out of a total of 240 all ranks. We are told that the Irishmen and E. Surreys formed up, and asked to be taken back to recapture the lost guns; but Gen. Buller refused.

Dec. 17.

I have been round to many of our regiments, and especially those that suffered most, and one and all are true as steel to Buller.

Been on duty all day patrolling.

Lieut. Roberts was buried to-day, and we hear that his father was to-day appointed Commander-in-Chief for South Africa.

Dec. 18.

Pickets to-day. We got a plentiful supply of milk, eggs, and fowls, and enjoyed a first-class feed. Two of B squadron had a scrap, and both got badly marked.

Dec. 19.

The Naval guns smashed Colenso bridge, making excellent shooting.

Someone has commandeered my shaving kit, bad luck to them! But I borrow from the "Widow" O'Brien.

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Dec. 20.

13th Hussar picket surprised; two killed, two wounded.

Patrols of South African Light Horse, and Natal Carbineers, Bethune's Mounted Infantry, and Thorneycroft's engaged the enemy to-day. A brisk little fight was put up. The Hussars came out and gave us a hand. The Naval guns also chimed in with a few 4.7 shells, and in the end we gave the Dutchmen a decent drubbing. They say (our prisoners) they have thirty-four killed and wounded.

The South African Light Horse lost Capt. de Rougemont killed, and four men wounded. All told, our casualties are sixteen killed and wounded.

Dec. 21, 22, 23, 24.

Patrols or pickets. Rained hard most of the time, and we are all soaked through.

Dec. 25.

Christmas Day. Capt. Grenfel (10th Hussars) and Capt. Kirkwood were captured to-day while bathing, or something equally foolish.

Kirkwood is a Reform Committee man, and will probably be roughly handled by his captors. Where are those plum puddings?

Dec. 26.

Boxing Day. The camp went in for sports and horse racing, Capt. Anderson winning the "Tugela Handicap"; more power to South African Light Horse. We tackled the Tommies at footer, and won by three goals to none.

Dec. 27.

I've been hunting up Public School men, and find heaps of them—Haileybury, Felsted, Wellington,

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Lancing, Dulwich, Shrewsbury, Charterhouse, and City of London all being represented. They are very good men, and all excellent foragers.

Jan. 1.

Winston Churchill was in camp to-day, having had the luck to escape from Pretoria.

Jan. 2, 3, 4.

Rain, rain, rain.

By the untiring energy of P—— we are saved from a wash out. P——spends most of his spare time in strengthening the trenches about our tent.

Jan. 6.

We are told that our men in Ladysmith have been fighting since 3 a.m. The guns can be plainly heard.

Shortly after 2 p.m. we marched out of camp, making tracks for Colenso. I think that our fellows in Ladysmith must be hard pressed, and that our advance is merely a ruse to draw off some of the investing Dutchmen.

About 5 p.m. we were caught in the worst storm I ever saw; thunder, lightning, hail, rain, and wind combined to drive us dripping back to our camp.

Jan. 7.

Dull and rainy. Came back to camp soaked to the skin. The niggers told us that our men in Ladysmith had beaten the Dutch, killing and wounding hundreds, besides taking many prisoners. Been on No. 1 picket.

Jan. 8.

S——, who has just ridden back from Frere, says that a civilian crowd of body-snatchers have arrived there, some of whom did very good work at Colenso.

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Jan. 9.

The advance commenced to-day. We are told there is to be no going back, and that we may expect a warm time with our "brother Boer."

Had to show an Engineer officer how to cross a spruit. He was sending for bridges, or doing something equally elaborate.

Rained like hell all day.

Jan. 10.

Fine day. I return to Chieveley. Apples were issued to-day. The Squadron-Sergeant-Major of C has the luck to obtain a barrel of beer, which he retails twice daily at threepence per pint.

Jan. 11.

Rode out to take the bridge over the Little Tugela. To our surprise we found none of the enemy. We escorted the 4.7 to Pretorius' Farm.

Dundonald went on with the regiment to scout in the neighbourhood of Potgeiter's drift.

Jan. 12.

Return to Chieveley. Capt. Renton tells me that our fellows seized Spearman's Hill last night. It was covered with Dutch trenches.

Jan. 13.

Carlisle and six of F squadron swam across the Tugela and fetched the pont. They were cornered coming back, and twenty of us were sent to help them.

Jan. 14.

The Dutch can be plainly seen building schanzes and trenches.

Jan. 17.

Arrived at Wagon drift from Chieveley. Several of our men had a bath; some were nearly drowned. Big guns are in action.

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Jan. 18.

Balloon went up to-day.

We go out and try to hold the road from Van Reenens to Ladysmith. Got to Acton Homes, where we had a hot fight with some Germans, who were fighting for the Dutch.

We killed twelve, wounded eight, and took about thirty prisoners. The Carbineers did most of the work.

Jan. 20.

Capture of "Bastion Hill" by our fellows, gallantly led by Tobin and the black retriever. Arriving upon the summit, we were greeted by pom-pom and shell fire from another hill some 3,000 yards, or less, away.

Major Childe, of F squadron, was killed, a shell striking him full in the head; the same explosion killed five or six men also. Bullets and shells came thick and fast all day, and one could scarce show an arm without being hit. The previous day Major Childe had a presentiment of early death, and asked his fellow officers to have the following epitaph placed above his grave. "Is it well with the child? She answered, It is well."

The Tommies have been fighting all day, and have lost heavily.

Jan. 21.

Dutch have bombarded us all day; our guns appear to be out-classed.

We have been holding a spur of Brakfontein all day, exposed to a galling rifle and pom-pom fire; yet, strange to relate, we never lost a single man. Of course, we had excellent cover. Fired 115 rounds. Gen. Hart's Irish Brigade lost a lot of men to-day. We have made little or no progress. This position appears to me to be stronger than that at Colenso.

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The Dutch big guns are posted in splendid positions and do us a lot of injury.

Jan. 22.

Gen. Buller was at the front early this morning. One of our patrols scouting near Doornkop was surprised, and lost six men killed and wounded.

Jan. 24—26.

R——, of Thorneycroft's, has given me the following short account of the fighting on Spion Kop:

"We got somewhere near the summit about half-past four, when I heard a challenge in Dutch. Somebody in our crowd replied, and almost instantly a dozen of our men fired. Then followed a mad rush with the bayonet, and all was over with the Boer picket. Reaching the top, we were so done up, that we almost dropped where we stood, and had to be given a long rest. Then an order came to build shelters, but there were no stones small enough to lift, and the ground itself was like iron. Just as the mist began to lift, Mauser shots came from the right, but no foe was seen. We had been on the hill about five hours at this time.

Soon shells began to arrive from all quarters, and in all sizes, from the pom-pom to the 94lb.

"From time to time reinforcements came up, till we had quite 4,000 men upon the hill. Fresh commandoes also came into the battle, and the fire of the enemy became heavier than ever. Men were falling rapidly, the shell of the enemy doing great damage.

"We felt the want of guns cruelly, as against the Boer artillery we were helpless.

"About ten o'clock the rattle of rifles and roaring of the big guns was awful. Our trenches were fast filling with dead and dying men, whose constant, imploring cry was, 'Water! water!' Our water

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bottles were long ago empty, and not one drop was available for our poor stricken comrades. One of our men close beside me had his whole chest blown away by a one pound shell; he fell forward dead, across the body of a wounded comrade, whose one piteous cry was 'Water!' Still the unequal fight went on, amidst clouds of dust raised by the striking, whistling shells.

"Soon our men were running to right and left in a vain endeavour to find a more secure shelter from the fearful hail of shells and bullets. Death seemed to find them equally well behind boulders as in the open.

"General Woodgate was killed somewhere about 11 a.m., and about 1 p.m. Col. Thorneycroft seemed to take over the command. Thorneycroft was everywhere; cool and brave, where many would have lost their heads. The enemy were now becoming bolder, advancing in extended order, firing from the hip, an old trick of theirs, before dropping to cover. Their losses must have been very heavy, yet could not even compare with ours. The dead were now in heaps; some such heaps were used as shelter, until those seeking it were added to it themselves. Early in the afternoon some of the Lancashires surrendered after making several desperate bayonet charges; their firing line was a row of dead, maimed, and dying men. About 3 p.m. a bullet went through my shoulder, and as I crawled to the rear another went through my leg. On the way down I met the Scottish Rifles coming up; their arrival saved the hill."

Jan. 25—31.

Spion Kop has been abandoned. Why, we don't quite know. We retire to our old camp at Spearman's Farm, and take up our old occupation of outposts and pickets. Zwart Kop has been strongly fortified, and the naval 4.7 are in position up there,

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On the 30th we had a reconnaissance, but saw little of the enemy.

Feb. 4.

Fighting again to-day towards Brakfontein, which position is strongly held by the enemy. Big guns have been shelling the Boer trenches since about eight o'clock. About noon the Dutch big guns commenced to reply, and our howitzers also got into action, using a 55lb. lyddite shell. Balloon was up to-day. When the bombardment of Vaal Krantz began, the roar of guns seemed to be doubled, and the enemy upon the hill must have had a very warm time. Huge clouds of dust raised by the lyddite mingled with the whiter clouds that came from bursting shrapnell. By the aid of glasses one could see rocks, stones, and bushes uprooted, and scattered far and wide upon the summit of the mountain. It seemed almost impossible that men could live in such an atmosphere of death; and yet artillery fire, apart from its moral effect, is often harmless. After the bombardment had ceased, the King's Royal Rifles and Durhams took the hill with but little loss.

Feb. 5.

Our outposts were attacked last night; we managed to beat off the enemy without loss. The Dutch big guns started early this morning, and, I think, shelled everyone impartially.

Our naval boys joined in the fun, and tried hard to silence the Boer 6in. on Doorn Kloof. Nothing much has been done to-day in the way of gaining ground.

Feb. 6.

The Durhams and King's Royal Rifles, who are holding Vaal Krantz, were attacked to-day, and did not beat the Dutchmen back until the bayonet was used. The attack on Doorn Kloof, if it comes off,

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will be a much harder nut to crack than Spion Kop. It appears to me that it might be flanked from Doorn Kop, which is opposite it, south of the Tugela.

Feb. 7.

To the surprise of us all we are retiring again.

Feb. 8.

The retirement of last night was a marvel. Horsemen, guns, infantry, waggons, &c., all across the pontoons in a single night, with no loss; better still, no confusion. Men with lanterns were placed at the dangerous places, and went ahead of each regiment until the danger was passed. Yesterday the Dutch trenches on the north side of the river were evacuated, but not destroyed. To remedy this, about 100 of the Dorsets stripped and crossed the river with boots and rifles, successfully accomplishing the work. We had a good laugh at their "au naturel" uniform.

Feb. 9—11.

Back to Chieveley again. Outposts and pickets again. Heavy rain was productive of much bad and curious language, especially when one is routed out of one's blankets at 2.30 to chase the wily and elusive snipers.

Feb 12.

Reconnaissance to-day to Hussar Hill.

Jack Churchill wounded in leg. Jackson of the ambulance hit three times. We retired to camp in the evening.

Feb. 14.

The real advance has begun to-day.

I narrowly escaped a journey to Pretoria, or elsewhere, by losing touch with my squadron. We left our camp at Stewart's Farm about 5.30 a.m., and

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joined the rest of our brigade on our way to Hussar Hill.

Crossing the railway, we rode gaily across the level stretch which lies in front of the Boer positions, striking Hussar Hill by No. 1 picket. Thorneycroft's were first engaged on our left; soon the bullets came whistling among us, and we dismounted and extended. Our Colt guns found excellent shelter in a stone kraal, and most thoroughly searched the bush and scrub in our front with a hail of bullets.

Advancing, we were soon firing away merrily, adding to the rapid tat-tat-tat-tat of the Colts. We had advanced probably half a mile, when I came across a beautiful donga, sloping gradually towards Hlangwani Hill. Slipping into the donga, I found myself with good cover, and an excellent view of the Boers, as they went scuttling from cover to cover, about 1,000 yards or less away. My friendly donga gave me less and less shelter as I advanced. At this moment it occurred to me that I could no longer hear our Colts. So, standing upright, I endeavoured to locate them. To my dismay I could neither see Colt guns nor friendly Sakaboola feathers, and it dawned upon me that I was alone. As I came to this conclusion, the crack of a rifle and the whiz of a bullet made me drop to earth. Looking round to discover my foe, I saw a biggish rock sixty yards ahead of me. A second bullet made me make record time for that sixty yards, and, panting, I dropped behind my friendly rock. Again I cautiously looked about me, and luckily spotted the gentleman who was taking pot shots at me, lying prone in a mealie patch, about 300 yards away. My first ten shots I blazed away in a hurry, consequently missing by yards. My opponent contented himself with firing three, all of which came abominably near. My next shot hit the ground a

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yard or so in front of him, while his in return struck just under the bolt of my rifle. Covering him again, I pressed the trigger. An attempt to jump up, followed by a quick return to the prone position, told me that my last shot had got home. My gratification was short-lived, for I had scarce re-loaded when a dozen bullets came all round me. No doubt during the progress of the previous duel others of the enemy had taken advantage of my pre-occupation, and closed in. The crack of the rifles came from some rocks in front, and I loosed off about ten or a dozen shots at them in a most indiscriminate manner. Bullets were falling round me thickly, and I was almost on the point of using an extremely dirty handkerchief as a white flag, when there was a sudden cessation of the Boers' fire. While I was puzzling over this new feature, I was considerably startled by a voice behind me saying: "Stick to it, Light Horse; there are lots of us here." Turning, I saw a Tommy; behind him was a long, long line of Tommies. It appears that as the Royal Welsh Fusiliers were advancing to the attack, one of their subalterns had spotted me through his glasses, and had despatched half a dozen of his men to my assistance. Unfortunately two of them were shot while running up to my shelter. Advancing, the Royal Welsh Fusiliers entrenched Hussar Hill, and the final stage towards Ladysmith was begun. On my return to my squadron, I found that I had been reported missing.

Feb. 15.

The naval guns have got into position on Hussar Hill, and are giving Hlangwani, Green Hill, and Monte Christo a taste of their quality. The Dutchmen are also making good practice, and not a few shells have fallen among us, fortunately doing no damage.

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Feb. 16.

Gen. Buller and his staff had a warm time to-day, pom-pom and other shells falling all around them. We are escort to the guns, and, bar shells, have rather a soft time. Chocolate (Queen's) issued.

Feb. 17.

Perhaps one of the best moves of the Third Mounted Brigade was made to-day. At 2.30 a.m. we were on the move. Through lines of sleeping men we floundered in the darkness. At daylight we were far to the east of our late bivouac, and in very rough country indeed. Very soon the road narrowed down to a mere Kaffir path, and we could only advance in single file.

Curious, indeed, must it have been to see fifteen hundred men galloping in single file. Many a man had a fall. The country through which we were proceeding was wild and beautiful in the extreme. Tall grass, cactus, prickly pears, mimosa, ferns, &c., were encountered in rich profusion, while to our left, clothed in dense jungle and strewn with boulders, rose the heights of Cingolo. We had galloped ten or twelve miles when we swung round to our left, and halted at the foot of the heights. Every man was engaged in getting as much biscuit down his throat as possible when the order "to mount!" came. Two miles further we dismounted, and the real climb began. So dense was the bush that one often could not see one's comrade ahead, and in some places men were placed to show those in rear the correct road. The paths, or apology for such, grew steeper and steeper as we advanced, tugging very unwilling horses behind us. Many an unauthorised halt was made by men whom sickness or exhaustion compelled to rest. Luckily the Dutch picket did not expect an attack

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from our quarter, for a dozen good shots and determined men could have held our Brigade at bay. Our leading squadron had reached the top ere the Boers discovered us.

The Dutchmen poured volley after volley into the bushes, but did no harm. Then they commenced to retire, a movement which enabled the remainder of the Brigade to reach the summit. Seeing themselves outnumbered, the Boers retreated hastily, losing several men so doing. Following up our success, we descended into the plain, so threatening the rear of any isolated Boers who might contemplate making a stand on the western spurs of Cingolo. We bivouacked a mile or so from the Nek which divides Cingolo from Monte Christo.

Feb. 18.

Our bivouac had been located by the enemy during the night, for with daylight Boer shells began falling around us. The infantry were also having a warm time upon Cingolo Heights, but steadily the Queen's worked along the remaining spurs, ignoring bullet and shell in their relentless advance.

Meanwhile our men had been scouring the plain far and wide, driving isolated parties of the enemy back to Monte Christo. About noon the Queen's had all but cleared Cingolo Mountain, and were steadily advancing upon the Nek which separated Cingolo and Monte Christo. Occasionally a squadron of our men would spur forward, and, quickly dismounting, pour in a deadly volley at Boers who were fleeing from the bayonets of the Queen's. The infantry were already in the Nek, and attacking Monte Christo, when we got the order to gallop. Fifteen hundred mounted men, excited by victory, take some stopping, nor did we halt, spite the hail of bullets, until we dismounted

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at the foot of the Key to Ladysmith (Monte Christo). Up the Third Mounted went in truly gallant style, Carbineers, Imperial Light Horse, Composites, Thorneycroft's, and the Sakaboolas, each trying to outdo the other. Whether the Queen's or ourselves were atop first I cannot say; but it is no small kudos to cry "evens" with so gallant a regiment. The laager in the centre of the hill yielded a rich harvest in tobacco, meal, rice, flour, and clothing of all kinds. Later in the day an infantry battalion dragged two naval 12-pounders to the summit. As for ourselves, we had earned a day's rest—and got it.

Feb. 19.

A squadron are on Monte Christo, taking care of our naval 12-pounders.

One can plainly see Ladysmith from the mountain top, and our helio is in communication with that of the defenders.

Fusilier Brigade have taken Hlangwani Hill with but slight opposition. Colenso has also been occupied by the Rifles. Two of our men had a most determined fight to-day; everything was en règle—sponges, bottles, seconds, and referee.

Fourteen vigorous rounds were fought, both men getting badly mauled.

Gifford, who was wounded yesterday, came running down the hill with a short stick between his teeth. Asked for the reason, he said: "I am afraid of lock-jaw!" He was shot through the big toe. We could not help but grin. But it might have been serious.

Feb. 20—22.

The big guns are all massed on the bush-covered plateau which lies between Hlangwani and Monte Christo. Two of our squadrons were dismounted to

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give the Royal Garrison Artillery a hand. Our horses are getting quite used to the report of heavy artillery, merely throwing up their heads at the report. About noon we crossed the plateau, and, skirting Hlangwani on the north, passed over the pontoon which bridges the Tugela just above the cataract. The enemy greeted our appearance with a few well-aimed shrapnell, which, however, did not burst.

We found most of the cavalry across the river, and hidden as much as possible behind Fort Wylie.

Gossip says we are to make a dash for Ladysmith, viâ Groblers Kloof, over which runs a road to the beleagured town.

On the 22nd we camped under the shelter of a kopje, on the further side of which two of our guns were fighting a desperate duel with the enemy. Many of the enemy's shells missed both guns and kopje, and came bursting in our midst, but only a few horses were hit. Last night, about midnight, one of our men was shot through the foot. The infantry have had a terrible time, but have fought gamely to the end. The volunteer ambulance (body-snatchers) have been equally brave, and have brought scores, nay, hundreds, of wounded down upon trolleys, thus utilising the railway in the only manner open to us. We are gaining ground slowly, fighting day and night.

Apparently the powers that be have changed their mind regarding our dash for Ladysmith, for we have again recrossed the Tugela, and, after camping close to the trenches which were our objective on December 15, ride to Frere. The last "bush wire" is that 600 Boers have crossed the Tugela, and are threatening our communications. In consequence we have been sent to intercept them. We arrived at Frere about 5 p.m.

At 7 p.m. it began to pour with rain, and continued

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until daylight. Clothing, saddlery, equipment, men and horses, are soaked through and through. In the morning, wet and weary, we marched to Springfield, finding no enemy, and hearing of none. Captain Renton, D squadron, had a bad fall, as also did yours truly. Camped upon the heights above Frere railway bridge. Managed to get hold of some tinned goods from the store near railway station.

It is nothing to be awakened suddenly at night by furious rifle fire, which continues sometimes for an hour or more.

To-day Jack O'Brien and myself went to see the Dutch trenches which line the Tugela. Words can scarcely give an idea of their strength. In addition to the ordinary trench, were rifle pits, which communicated with others by means of underground passages. Again, all trenches unscreened by bush, &c., had had the earth excavated carried away, so that the keenest eye could not detect a shelter unless within fifty yards.

Feb. 23, 24.

Started for Colenso again. Upon our arrival we found more big guns massed between Hlangwani and Monte Christo. A big move is evidently on the tapis, as the infantry are gradually concentrating upon our right. Our infantry are making a grand fight; night and day they are at it, and although they gain but little upon our stubborn foe, they give back never an inch. After galloping about all day, seemingly to no purpose, we bivouac under the shadow of Monte Christo.

Feb. 25.

Sunday. There is either an armistice or truce. I have been down to the river. Dead and dying infantry are being borne to the hospitals, some in

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waggons, others on stretchers. It is a fearful sight, and one cannot but admire the true courage which takes fresh comrades up a hill which yields such a ghastly harvest. A curious fact is that every one has such blind faith in Buller. "The old man will get us through," says Tommy.

Feb. 26.

We have been supporting the infantry, fighting all day. The Tommies again fought like heroes. Our artillery has literally knocked corners off Pieters and Railway Hills; every blessed gun we have got seems firing upon those two hills.

Feb. 27.

Majuba Day. The rifle fire continued all last night; some of the escort to the guns behind us were hit by spent bullets. The naval gunners started cheering, and we sent to ask the reason. "Cronje has surrendered to Roberts, with his whole army, 9,000 men, and twenty guns." So ran the message, and cheers went up from regiment after regiment as the great news flashed over the field of battle. Nothing could stop our infantry after the news was known. We swept the bush and smaller kopjes to the right of the infantry attack with storms of lead, and twice the Third Mounted Brigade drove back a determined attempt by the Boers to flank our infantry. The howitzers, guns big and little, rained shell upon Railway and Pieters; then a pause. Three times the flash of bayonets was seen; a fourth was not waited for by the Dutchmen. The Royal Lancasters crowned the hard-won heights.

Feb. 28.

We slept last night where our horses stood, but not before the victorious cheers of the infantry had echoed from hill to hill, from regiment to regiment. At

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noon we crossed the pontoon that bridged the Tugela below the waterfall. At a smart trot we went up the road, seeing upon both sides the havoc made by the artillery. Shrapnel bullets were more plentiful than stones, while shattered masses of saffron-coloured rock showed where lyddite had done its work. Mangled corpses of our late foemen lay among the largest rocks, putrefying under a baking sun.

Forward we went until we reached the crest of Pieters. Here was a large tree, which had been completely blasted by a lyddite shell. Not a leaf remained. Bole, branch, and twig were alike torn and twisted, coloured saffron. Forward again; we decended into the plain, in the centre of which is the railway station. At the gallop D squadron crossed the plain, and occupied the ridge upon the further side, under the shadow of Umbulwana. A few half-hearted shots were fired at us by the enemy. We shot seven pigs, all of whom were in excellent condition, and made prime pork. About six o'clock the plain behind us was alive with mounted men galloping in every direction, searching bush, kopje, and dongas. Later all the Third Mounted Brigade massed, and with scouts in advance rode towards Ladysmith. The enemy, every now and then, fired shrapnel at the cavalry who were scouting towards Umbulwana, but there were no casualties.

Pressing onward, the Third Mounted Brigade reined up under a kopje which faced the fortifications upon Wagon Hill. Here the resolve was made not to enter the town, since we of the relief column were almost as badly in want of food as the late beleaguered garrison. So Lord Dundonald, with a detachment of Natal troops, numbering some fifty men, entered Ladysmith across the plain by Intombi camp. But eight horsemen also went, without order, viâ Wagon

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Hill, and had the satisfaction of first seeing, or almost first, the helmeted, heroic defenders of Ladysmith.

Mar. 1.

The official entry was made to-day.

We were not, I think, supposed to go into Ladysmith at all, our orders being to scout in the direction of Klip river and Besters. However, whatever our orders were, Capt. Renton took D squadron into the town just in rear of the Royal Horse Artillery.

What one noticed most going through the town was the pinched, starved, and weary look upon the faces of the men of the gallant garrison. Again and again, in conversation with men of different corps, we were told, "You're none too soon, lads; another week would have seen the end." Many of us had carried tobacco, milk, chocolate, and such-like dainties, intending to distribute them to the sick and wounded; but scarce had we gone a quarter of a mile inside the garrison lines, than every man Jack of us had given away his store to the uttermost. Men pale and haggard with sickness, feeble as old men, begged and prayed for cigarettes, tobacco, &c.

Women begged tea and coffee of us, and only too gladly we gave our all. Children gazed at us wistfully as we rode by, happy if an odd end of biscuit were thrown to them. In the van of Buller's army marched the gallant Dublins; all their comrades allowed them to have won, by reckless, dashing bravery, the post of honour. Others, too, were there who fought the good fight. Men of Surrey, men of Devon, Scottish heroes, Lancashire and London lads, gave back cheer for cheer to the men who lined the streets. Stone walls and trenches met our eyes upon every summit, showing that the garrison had laboured equally with pick, shovel, and rifle. As the squadron of Light Horse passed the Town Hall, it was greeted

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with "Bravo, Byng's Bounders!" 'Well, done, Sakaboolas!" "Cock-a-doodle-dooo!" "Byng's Contingent," &c. Doubtless we looked a disreputable crowd; tunics rent and tattered, boots secured to our feet by string and wire, a month's growth of beard upon nearly every face; heaped upon all was the dust of a fourteen days' fight.

Mar. 2.

Scouting towards and beyond the Klip river, we found fifty cases of dynamite.

Mar. 4.

Sunday. Thanksgiving service in Ladysmith.

Mar. 5—14.

On outpost duty at Besters Station, sixteen miles from Ladysmith. We have had many a hard gallop, and our horses are beginning to show signs of fatigue. The Dutch farms are all deserted. Food and game of all descriptions has been most plentiful. Eggs, butter and milk ad libitum.

The natives are very pleased to see our troops, the Dutchmen having treated them harshly.

I have been very queer with dysentery, and but for the kindness of my comrades, must have gone under. They saddled up for me, brought me milk, butter and eggs every day; sometimes risking life or liberty to cater for the fancies of a sick man.

Mar. 15.

F squadron, who relieved us at Besters, have had a skirmish with the enemy close to Van Reenen's Pass. They lost about three men.

I guide Dr. Keenan to Besters. We started at 10 p.m., and had a very dark ride. Were caught in barbed wire several times. On reaching the station,

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we found one man with a dislocated shoulder, which our Irish "sawbones" soon put right. The doctor is a pleasant and talkative companion.

Mar. 16.

Returned to Ladysmith. I had scarce dismounted, when a terrific hailstorm came on; hastily tethering my pony, I made tracks for the nearest tent. Many horses were stampeded; several were killed. Two niggers were also killed by lightning. After the storm was over, the hail was quite six inches deep on the veldt. Some of our men declare that during such storms hailstones have been known to go through corrugated iron roofing. Ananias' family was a large one.

Mar. 18.

In charge of examining guard on the Van Reenen's road; a twenty-four hours' guard.

Mar. 19.

Sports to-day. Being absent on duty, I could not take part. D squadron won the "quick turn out" competition. Twenty men from each squadron had to dress, saddle up, and fall in. D squadron's time was 3m. 18s. Not bad.

Mar. 20.

Dined at Royal Hotel. We had to dodge the sentries upon the bridge, as no one was allowed in the town without a pass. However, it is a well known scientific fact that a sentry cannot see very well with a dollar in each eye.

Mar. 22.

I was poisoned to-day through eating tinned fish; I was in awful pain. Corp. Haines pulled me round by the judicious use of chloroform and mustard and water.

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Mar. 23, 24.

Rifle practice. After my late indisposition, I am placed "ex duty," so did not turn out.

Mar. 25.

Sunday. Divine service. Desperate fight in C squadron lines; nine rounds fought.

Mar, 26,

Pony had gripes to-day. Walked him up and down the lines almost the whole night.

Mar. 27.

Pony better; eats well.

Mar. 28.

Found a box of Pears' soap, and had an excellent shave. Sold half the box for ten shillings.

Mar. 30.

Olive has a pet goat, which has eaten the feathers out of my hat, as well as those of others in the troop.

April 1.

All Fools' Day is amply illustrated by the arrival of many recruits. Some of our wounded also came back, looking hale and hearty.

April 2.

Rode into Ladysmith with despatches for H. Q. Met I——, who had located an unowned bag of oysters. Having carefully reconnoitred the immediate vicinity, we removed the bivalves to a more secure haven—to wit, our camp.

April 3.

Fatigue party to bring saddlery from the railway station.

April 4.

Impromptu concert. Much talent, more noise.

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April 5.

D squadron beat C at soccer, 4 to 3.

April 6.

Inspection of horses, saddlery, arms, &c.

April 7.

We are under orders to march in the morning. Consequently everyone is in high spirits.

We have all had more than enough of the hamlet of Ladysmith. We shall soon, I hope, be routing our "Brother Boer" out of the Biggarsberg.

April 8.

En route for Elandslaagte; a hot and beastly dusty ride. During the afternoon I was told the H.A.C. battery had passed us. Riding back, I find that the H.A.C. in question is Howitzer Ammunition Column.

April 9.

"Lucky D" were sent off to scout in the direction of Ionono's Kop, which had been left unoccupied, although it commanded the whole British camp. Carefully feeling our way, we reached the foothills unopposed, and commenced to scale the mountain. After a hard climb we reached the highest plateau, stumbling upon a Dutch observation post, who must have certainly been sleeping. Had it been otherwise, few of our troop would have seen another sunrise.

One gets a magnificent view from the summit.

April 10.

While partaking of a leisurely breakfast, three Boer guns opened on our camps. The infantry were first visited, and lost several men. The turn of the Natal Carbineers came next. The South African Light Horse stood to their horses when the first shell landed in our neighbour's camp, and waited for things to develop. We did not have to wait long. The first

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shell to visit us went through Capt. Molyneux's tent, and bowled over a horse. The second "turned out the guard," since it upset the guard tent. Jack O'Brien and his men, who were on duty, limbered up in haste, and small blame to them. The regiment was in column of troops when two shells came amidst us; luckily neither burst. Moving under cover, sniping was heard on our right. C squadron were sent to join in the fun. Later in the day C were tackled by 200 of the enemy, with a pom-pom. Being well handled, they compelled the Boers to retreat. Our losses were eight or ten wounded.

April 11.

D squadron leave the regiment, and are attached to Gen. Hildyard's Brigade. We find outposts to cover the right flank of the army.

April 12.

Ride over to Boy's Farm with despatches from Capt. Tucker. Hare gave me an excellent dinner.

April 13.

Ride over to Sir C. Warren's head-quarters in search of F squadron. By the aid of the helio am saved a good four miles ride. Return to squadron at dusk.

April 14.

Constable and I are sent to "observe" if the enemy are at Waschbank. We get observed, and have to gallop back.

April 15.

We hold up, and nearly shoot, two of our own men, who have been on special duty beyond the outposts.

April 16.

While exploring for milk and fowls in a kraal, we accidentally unearth a Dutch nigger scout, and promptly hale him off to durance vile.

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April 17, 18, 19.

Patrols by day; pickets by night.

April 20.

D squadron rejoins the regiment at Boy's Farm. I have to carry my dog upon the saddle, since we have no waggons with us. We erect sangars around the camp.

April 21.

Night duty on the hills overlooking the camp. D squadron are certainly kept on the move.

April 22.

We leave the regiment at Boy's Farm, and go back to Smith's Crossing and the Besters district. We take up the duties of G squadron, who, unwillingly, leave this land of milk, eggs, and fowls, to fatten upon "bully and biscuit" elsewhere.

April 23.

Outpost at Hobland Farm. Milk and eggs ad lib. The niggers here are mostly "Christians."

April 24.

Outpost at Spitzkop. Loot oranges from Besters; also an excellent selection of novels. Take a couple of rocking-chairs back to camp.

The Dutch evidently made up their minds at one time to fortify this post. Here are gun emplacements, trenches, rifle pits, and sangars all excellently placed, as they command the whole country and railway up to the drift across the Klip three miles from Ladysmith. I have never heard that anyone else on our side has ever seen these defences.

April 25.

Outpost at Besters Station. Patrol to within a mile or so of De Beers pass. All quiet.

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April 26.

Ride to Nicholson's Nek with Lieut. Churchill, who slates Thorneycroft's sub. for being late at the rendezvous.

April 27.

Scouting round Hobland's Farm, and to the west of Ionono's Kop. Sight two or three of the enemy. Dragoons fired upon.

May 1.

Left D squadron in camp at Smith's Crossing. I am to take charge of South African Light Horse orderlies on Gen. Buller's telegraph staff. Excellent football match this afternoon between Ladysmith Town and the Army Service Corps; the latter won, 3 to 1.

May 2.

Dined at Royal Hotel and had a good feed. Dr. Stark was killed in this hotel on November 18. He was standing in the doorway when a 94lb. shell from Long Tom on Umbulwana came through the roof of the hotel, thence going through walls, &c., passed out of the doorway, killing the doctor en route. The landlord, with an eye to advertisement, makes no effort to repair the damage.

May 3.

Went over to Wagon Hill and had a look at the scene of the fighting on January 6, &c.

Severe hailstorm to-day, many people and horses injured. Three niggers killed by lightning.

May 4.

Refitted myself with clothes at my own expense. One cannot possibly wear the Government shoddy. Camp gossip says we are to move shortly.

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May 5.

Dined at Railway Refreshment rooms with T. C. Poor feed but excellent Pilsener.

May 6.

Watched an excellent footer match between Ladysmith Town and a military team. Result, draw, 2 to 2.

May 9.

Left Ladysmith at 10 a.m. with telegraphs under Capt. Kennedy, R.E.

Our road ran past Lombard's Kop, and then almost due north from Umbulwana. Had we known, on February 28, that the country immediately behind Umbulwana was so well adapted for cavalry we might have had the pleasure of seeing a charge. Covered with a short scrub, the veldt is almost level for about eight miles. Arriving at Piet's Farm, we find it occupied by the 18th Hussars, who gave us a pint of beer per man.

May 10.

A long and tiring march through the most admirable fighting country—a succession of kopjes clothed with bush and scrub, the level country being interspersed with mimosa trees and tall grass, while deep and wide dongas made an ambuscade every mile a possibility. Reached Sunday's River Drift, where we camped for the night. On duty until three a.m., have been galloping about all night with despatches.

Camp at Waschbank.

May 12, 13.

Another march similar to yesterday; we camp at Vermaak's Kraal. South African Light Horse have three men taken prisoners. Get a plentiful supply of oranges and lemons; later the police arrive and only officers are allowed in the garden.

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May 14, 15, 16, 17 to 28 inclusive.

An early move was made this morning.

The enemy shelled our convoy with a long-range gun; our 4.7 replied, and after four shots silenced the Dutchman.

Proceeding, we advance upon Helpmaakar. About 9 a.m. we were in front of the enemy's position upon the Biggarsberg. Thorneycroft's were the first to advance, their objective being to outflank the enemy's left and make conjunction with Bethune's Mounted Infantry, Umvoti Mounted Rifles, Border Mounted Rifles, who had advanced from Greytown yesterday. South African Light Horse took the central hills at a gallop, and were soon at the top without loss.

Our infantry meanwhile were advancing up the valley, the crests of the surrounding hills being strongly entrenched by the enemy.

Suddenly I heard guns on our right. At the same time our Infantry appeared to me to make a half-right movement which sent them up the same range of hills as the South African Light Horse, which same hills commanded the Boer position as well as the Dundee road. A few men being left to watch the berg, the remainder of the column moved up the Helpmaakar heights by a fairly good but very steep road. Continuous rifle and artillery fire was going on and several mesengers passed us going at the gallop for the big guns.

On reaching the top of the berg we found ourselves on a rather large plateau entrenched on the further side, whence pom-pom and 15-pounder shells came with great frequency. Here for the first time in the Natal campaign the pom-pom was used by us. The first half-dozen shells were accompanied by vigorous cheering on our part—our War Office had awakened at last. One pom-pom volley from the

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enemy came very close, and but for a friendly hole I had had my quietus.

The arrival of our big guns hastened the sequel of the fight. By four p.m. the Dutch had given way everywhere and were in full flight. Camped upon the battlefield.

After the enemy had fled from Helpmakaar, I had an opportunity of examining their defences. The trenches and sangars were equally as well made as those at Colenso. But the art of screening defences was even more marked here than upon any other battlefield that I have seen.

Early morning saw us in the saddle, and the pursuit began. Enemy opposed us with artillery and rifles, but the volunteer horse would not be checked, and with comparatively small loss we drove the Dutch helter-skelter along the Dundee road. The firing of the veldt by the Boers hid their rear-guard from us, and once or twice the 3rd Mounted Brigade galloped right among the hastily fleeing foe. The Light Horse once got entangled in barbed-wire fencing, they then being almost atop of the foe, nor did they extricate themselves until several horses and a man or two had been hit.

Before reaching Indumeni Spruit we were shelled by a long range gun, which was badly served, some of the shells falling half a mile from us. Crossing the Spruit we were close upon the foe again, and rifle shots were fired by either side. The horsemen camped about six miles in advance of the main body, and early next morning reoccupied Dundee. The parson, who had pluckily kept at his post during the Dutch occupation, regaled our foremost scout upon eggs and bacon—lucky man. The town itself was a perfect wreck, every unoccupied house having been looted from floor to roof-tree. The machinery

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of the coal mines was also damaged—in fact, the most wanton destruction appeared to have been systematically carried out. The railway to Glencoe was not damaged in any way, although every house in the hamlet was more or less wrecked.

On May 17 we crossed Hatting Spruit and reoccupied Dannhauser. The enemy were now in full flight and put forward little or no opposition. Pushing forward, we reoccupied Newcastle and caught a few stray Boers who had stayed too long. The town was quite gay with flags and bunting, and the townsfolk greeted each regiment with three hearty cheers. We could not now give up the pursuit, so on we went, past Signal Hill, past Schuins Hoogte, then up and down the Ingogo Heights, where rest the brave men who fell in '81. We crossed Ingogo Drift, and, leaving the reversing station on our right, went up Mount Prospect, thence to O'Neil's Farm; then, with Majuba towering above us, we halted, men and horses completely knocked up. The Royal Horse Artillery (A Battery) sent a few shells among the disorderly mob of Dutchmen who were rushing pell-mell up Laing's Nek.

In the morning the Natal men told us that the Dutch were reinforced during the night, and were then entrenching Majuba, Laing's Nek, and Pogwana. The tunnel under the Nek was also blown in at the Charlestown end.

On the evening of 18th I accompanied Capt. Kennedy, R.E., and ten Engineers to Ingogo Station. On nearing the station a nigger told me that the Dutch had observed our little party and had descended the hills in our direction with the evident intention of cutting us off. Captain Kennedy had not much faith in the nigger's tale, so pushed on and occupied the station, which was shortly con-

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nected with Headquarters. Shortly a message came through from the Director of Army Telegraphs saying that the Chief of Staff considered our position dangerous, and that an extra sharp watch must be kept.

For once I was in complete accord with the Chief of Staff, and took it into my head to do a little scouting on my own account. When Capt. Kennedy had settled his guards, &c., and had retired to the privacy of the only waiting room the little station boasted, I rode quietly down towards the Buffalo River, which marks the boundary between Natal and the Transvaal. I found a drift and crossed, so was probably the first man in Buller's Army to set foot on Transvaal soil. Dismounting, I scanned the surrounding country as well as the darkness would permit, but neither saw nor heard anything. I waited, perhaps, a couple of hours, when the neigh of a horse somewhere in front made me spring to my feet just in time to smother in my hat the answering neigh from my own pony. Anxiously I awaited developments, but none came, and after waiting some time longer I returned to the station, and off-saddling, rolled myself in my blankets and was soon fast asleep. At daybreak I was awake, and shortly after heard one of our sentries challenge, and Lieut. Howard and five men of the South African Light Horse rode into the station and proceeded along the same road I had traversed during the night. They had scarcely gone a mile from the station when I saw one come galloping back. His news was soon given: "Some fifty Boers were advancing on the station." Capt. Kennedy was quite equal to the occasion, and quickly but quietly the instruments were disconnected, the batteries hidden, and mules inspanned, ladders and heavy things put out of sight, and in five minutes we

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were all on our way to the Light Horse Camp. Upon our arrival at Headquarters, 3rd Mounted Brigade, a squadron of South African Light Horse was promptly sent out to reinforce Lieut. Howard, and to scour the vicinity of the station generally. After all was reported clear, we returned and fixed up the instruments again. While with the telegraphs on Sir F. Clery's Staff we had an amusing little joke with some of the Provost Marshal's Staff.

A farm in the immediate vicinity of the Ingogo Heights boasted a splendid orange grove well laden with golden fruit. The temptation proving too much for us, sacks were procured and a descent made upon the farm. Returning to camp with our booty, we were espied by a police corporal, who wanted to know how and where the fruit had been obtained. One of our party answered, saying, "Bought 'em, over there," indicating the farm with his hand. The corporal was a bit sceptical and called in the aid of his sergeant, who also declined to believe in the truthfulness of the Light Horse. Finally the Provost Marshal sent us back to the farm, oranges as well, in charge of the sergeant,, who was told to ask the nigger if we had paid for them. Arriving at the farm the astute sergeant found the nigger unable to speak English, and asked one of the Light Horse to interpret. The question as to payment was accordingly put in Kaffir. "C'ka baas," was the answer, and the sergeant returned and reported "All paid for, sir." The sergeant mistook the Zulu "c'ka" (no) for the Dutch "Ja" (yes). The regiment went to Utrecht, about the 20th, with Gen. Hildyard's Brigade. I did not accompany it, but stopped in Newcastle, and made occasional journeys out to Ingogo Heights, where General Clery's Brigade was lying.

On May 28, the Dutch shelled us from Pogwani

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Hill, to the summit of which they had dragged a 6in. gun. Our naval 4.7's replied, but not much damage was done by either side. There was also a little sniping on both sides, and a few of our men were hit. Somewhere about June 4 the South African Light Horse seized Van Wyck, a hill which overlooked the road to Botha's Pass, also commanding it. A few Boers were surprised upon the hill top, and fled before the rush of the Light Horse. The mounted men held the hill until the infantry came (Middlesex regiment) up, then retired on Yellow Bloom Farm. The naval 12-pounders were got into position on the hill top during the night, while the 4.7's and smaller guns took up positions on the lower spurs, thus effectually commanding the whole valley. A furious cannonade preceded the final advance, which eventually cleared Natal of the enemy. With the South African Light Horse in advance, the Fifth Division poured down the narrow mountain road into the valley. Quickly pushing forward, the South African Light Horse seized, and a squadron held, Spitzkop, a mountain which commanded the hills upon the further side of the valley. The enemy, being outmanœuvred, retired quickly, closely followed by the infantry, with the Royal Horse Artillery in support. The level ground at the foot of the pass was quickly won, and the infantry and mounted men began to climb the Berg. Two pom-poms were unmasked at this juncture; but the gunners were unnerved by our rapid advance, and the nasty little shells went high above the attacking troops, finally kicking up the dust in the valley far below. Steadily the Tommies went up the hills, halting at intervals for breath. The enemy now brought a 15-pounder into action, but it was too late; for, fixing bayonets, the infantry, with a cheer, rushed the faintly held hill crests, and Botha's

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Pass was won. It was a sight one cannot forget. To our right, as far as the eye could see, British soldiers crowned the mountains. We bivouacked upon the ground we had won, and bitterly cold was the night. A report was current in the morning that some one had borrowed Gen. Buller's blankets. The General was pitied, and the borrower envied. Some were heard to say that the Light Horse were implicated; others say the "Jocks." An early move was made in the morning, the South African Light Horse again in advance. Upon attempting to seize Krantz Kloof, the Light Horse became engaged at twenty yards range, and were unable to extricate themselves until fourteen men had been put hors de combat; sixteen of the enemy were killed and buried by us. Strength of the enemy about 800, and the Lydenburg commando coming up. Upon our long range guns coming into action, the Kloof was evacuated, and we camped at its foot after doing barely eight miles. During the night scouts informed us that the enemy were holding Alleman's Nek in force, and were entrenched. Early dawn saw the infantry advancing in extended order. Contact with the foe was not made until a hill was breasted which faced the Dutch position, and which ran at right angles to the road. Directly the infantry were visible, the Boer guns opened. The infantry pressed forward unconcernedly, the while our heavy guns got into action. The position could not be turned, so a frontal attack was the alternative. Never, do I think, have our artillery shown to better advantage than in this battle; their shooting was most accurate, especially the howitzers. The latter fired a volley which occasioned the enemy heavy loss. The rattle of rifles soon told that the Tommies were sharing in the proceedings, and so for four hours went the fight. Gradually the enemy's fire slackened, and

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a "bush wire" came through saying that the foe were on the run. A cheer, the flash of steel, and Alleman's Nek was ours.

Good old British infantry! Once again we camped upon the Dutch position, and again early dawn saw us in the saddle. Upon the further side of the Nek were many Dutch dead, mostly burnt and charred by the burning grass which their comrades had fired. D squadron, South African Light Horse, were early in advance, and, after a smart gallop, came in touch with the enemy's baggage and rear guard. A smart skirmish ensued, while messengers were sent back for guns and cavalry. The naval guns arrived, but not the 18th and 19th Hussars. The enemy were by this time out of range, and guns alone could do no good. After a march of eight miles or so we bivouacked at Kroom Draai.

The Cavalry entered Volksrust unopposed at dusk. We had a lazy reveille, but bands played and men cheered as we entered Transvaal Territory. By our victory Gen. Clery was enabled to occupy Laing's Nek, Majuba, and Charlestown unopposed, our late foemen retreating rapidly on Standerton. Our losses at Botha's Pass were slight, and at Alleman's Nek were about 100. An amusing incident occurred at Alleman's Nek. A drummer went into action with drum slung on one side, and a football on the other. A stretcher bearer of the Dorsets was smashed to a pulp not ten yards from me. It was an awful sight. The Dutch losses were very heavy, as our ambulance people buried 146. (Major Daly is my authority for this statement.)

June 12 to July 31.

The South African Light Horse, after a short rest, advanced on Wakkerstroom, which was entered unopposed. A short stay was made, and then the

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advance up the railway was made, Sand Spruit, Paarde Kop, Platrandt and Standerton being captured in succession by Buller's victorious army. The South African Light Horse raced the Provost Marshal into Standerton, and managed to buy some champagne, in which they drank to the health of the Natal army.

Strathcona's Horse joined the Third Mounted Brigade at Standerton, and real good comrades they were. Once they raised a bluff on the Light Horse, which deserves mention. Being hard up, financially, at Twyfelaar, many of their men sold their Colt revolvers to Light Horsemen at £2 each. The following morning, when our men paraded, the Colts were collected, and handed over to the officer commanding the Strathconas. The Light Horse fought a neat little fight outside Standerton at Joubert's Kop, and came off victorious, the hill being taken in dashing style, and with but little loss.

One of our men, who had friends in Standerton, was enabled to purchase a cargo of grog, which he packed into a portmanteau. Slightly "fresh," he was returning to camp, when he stumbled upon a picket, who refused to recognise his pass unless he left his "luggage" behind as a kind of security. Returning in the morning, his "luggage" was handed him, and a warning to be more careful in future tendered gratis. Surrounded by a knot of very thirsty and expectant comrades, he opened the portmanteau. It was full of neatly packed stones. Tableaux.

On July 16 a full corporal of the 19th Hussars shot himself. He was in hospital with enteric (Volksrust).

July 8, South African Light Horse were roused at 4 a.m. to go in chase of a party of Boers who had cut the rail and telegraph between Standerton and Greylingstaadt.

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At Volksrust, on July 17, I had an exciting little night ride. I was carrying a despatch to officer commanding Liverpool regiment, who were occupying Laing's Nek. When about half-way between Charlestown and the Nek, going at a steady canter, I was startled by a couple of rifle shots being fired from the darkness on my left. Spurring my pony, I galloped to the Nek, about three miles, at top speed, and arrived safely at my destination. Returning, I was accompanied by some of the Manchester Mounted Infantry, but we neither saw nor heard more. My supposition was that I had unwittingly stumbled upon a party of rail wreckers, who, taking me for the advance of a patrol, fired a couple of shots and fled.

Aug. 1.

Left Standerton en route for Paarde Kop; bivouac at Platrand.

Aug. 2.

Arrived at Paarde Kop after an uneventful march.

Aug. 3.

Out on patrol; a little sniping on our part.

Aug, 4.

Patrols again. Being orderly-sergeant, I did not leave camp. Lowe took my pony, having no mount of his own, he having just come out of hospital. The troop had scarcely left camp when my pony galloped back.

He had thrown poor Lowe, who was dragged some distance, and then got a kick in the head, which will send him back to hospital. The troop returned at dusk. Oliver, of C squadron, was captured.

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Aug. 5.

We started on what promises to be a long cross-country march—to Lydenburg, so camp gossip has it.

We were upon the extreme left, and came in touch with the enemy early in the day. Strathconas were soon briskly engaged, and our advance was fairly rapid. About 1 p.m. we located the enemy's main body on the heights above Amersfoort. The Third Mounted began to close in, while T. Atkins, in the centre, was giving them a taste of his quality. Our battery (A, Royal Horse Artillery) opened fire, and drove their right in upon its centre. Strathconas' pom-pom and our Colts also did good service. We were dismounted, and preparing to advance, when an artillery officer shouted, "They are bolting!" It was true enough. In two seconds we were in the saddle again, and with a cheer the whole of the Third Mounted Brigade, with A battery, Royal Horse Artillery, were in full pursuit, galloping up hill and down hill as if "Old Harry" were after them.

The Dutchmen evidently feared the Light Horse more than "Old Harry," as they went through the town like greased lightning. Our long range naval 12-pounder sent shell after shell into them.

In the town we found, amongst other things, a store filled with all manner of good things. Well, we took all we could, and I am sorry to say some of ours discovered, at the last moment, that they had "no change," and would pay to-morrow.

One house, belonging to an Englishman fighting for the Dutch, was completely wrecked.

It was a bitterly cold night, and Constable, Taylor, and myself "commandeered" a piano case, and slept inside. All night long one could hear ducks, geese, fowls, pigs, &c., in a state of uproar; probably some one was inadvertently breaking in upon their rest.

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Some of the Boer wounded had been left in the town, one of them with twelve shrapnel bullets in him.

Aug. 6.

Left Amersfoort to bring up the provision convoy, whom our rapid advance had left considerably in the rear. Bitterly cold and foggy morning. We found the convoy, and also the Natal Field Force canteen; thus we made a good breakfast, while the convoy inspanned. Bathed at mid-day, and reached main body about 5 p.m.

Aug. 7.

Left Amersfoort in pursuit of enemy, who had fired into our camp yesterday evening.

D squadron had a wild gallop for nothing. Captain "T." very wrathful; whole squadron more bad-tempered than usual. The regiment had a skirmish, and were just polishing off the Boers, when we rejoined. Strathconas were also engaged, letting their pom-pom go like unto a barrel organ. Camp at a farm, name unknown.

Aug. 8.

We were scouting to-day. Enemy kept very much in the distance. One or two shots exchanged.

Aug. 9.

Peace and quietness.

Aug. 10.

Camped at Vaal River. We have had a sharp little engagement, strictly confined to the Light Horse. We captured a very fine looking stone bridge

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before the Dutch had time to blow it up. White flag was much in evidence to-day.

We drove the enemy back, and occupied a farm built entirely of free-stone, and therein found about twenty sides of pork in pickle; needless to add, the South African Light Horse took them out, to prevent looting.

Aug. 11.

Stomachache is the result of too much pork for supper; we have many sufferers.

We arrived in Ermelo after a most tiring and dusty march. Every man Jack was as black as a sweep. Entered the town unopposed. An unauthorised picket was marched into the town at 2 a.m., with the result that some of the shop-keepers complain that their houses were entered during the night. I have now an excellent supply of silk handkerchiefs. The Military Mounted Police were bluffed splendidly.

Aug. 12.

Poor little McKillop broke his arm while coming back from watering parade.

We found an observation post to-day.

Aug. 13.

Leave Ermelo. McKillop left behind. Slight engagement. Heeley wounded. Bivouac at Klipstofel.

Aug. 14,

Sighted Carolina. Strathconas enter the town, and return to camp with sundry bottles of grog.

Aug. 15.

Scouting towards Carolina, some of us enter the town, and are well treated by mine hostess of the

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Republic Hotel. For my sins I was sent in charge of an outpost about a mile from town, and so only heard of the feast. Taylor brings some bread and cheese, so once more we are happy. The enemy are on the hills about five miles away.

As we left Carolina, we encountered a heavy fire from a kraal just beyond the quarry. We took cover, and returned the fire until Captain Tucker brought up the squadron in support; thereupon the Dutchmen fled. A new railway is in progress here.

F squadron lost three men, McDonald, McEwen, and one other. Bivouac at Twyfelaar, beside the Komati River.

Sgt. Taylor, who was patrolling on our left, came upon a farm house in which tables were set for about fifty people. Taylor and his men were asked to partake of the good things, which they did, first taking the precaution to post a sentry.

Ere the first course was finished the sentry gave the alarm. Taylor and his men just managed to get clear before a superior force of Dutchmen occupied the farm. As our men retired, the women in the farm unloosed three mastiffs, who almost pulled one of our men from his horse. A revolver shot settled the brute.

Aug. 16.

Twyfelaar. McEwen died, and was buried to-day.

Aug. 17.

McDonald died to-day.

Aug. 18.

Sunday. Church parade.

Aug. 19.

Cowley, C squadron, who was captured at Utrecht, reached our camp to-day, having escaped from Machadorp by tunnelling underneath the prison wall. He was seven days doing the journey.

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Aug. 20.

G——n, having stolen the Colonel's whisky, is discharged the regiment, and leaves with the Mail tomorrow.

Aug. 21

D squadron found pickets. B went "commandeering"; a few shots were fired.

Aug, 22.

Fighting all day in the hills. All the Third Mounted Brigade were engaged. However, we failed to make much impression upon the enemy. D 1 took a farm house in gallant style; found it too warm, and retired at a gallop. We managed to keep the enemy from attacking our convoy, and retire at dark, en route for Geluk.

On our return to camp, I came in for rather a severe wigging from my troop leader. I was slated for exposing my men too much during our retirement from the farm. However, no one was hit, and our original cover was reached in safety. Our gallop was a short one, but the enemy made it deuced lively.

Aug. 23.

More fighting to-day. Captain Savory missing, Lieut. Steel wounded, Sgt. Neve wounded, also Warren. F and G squadrons had a warm time.

Aug. 24.

Captain Savory found dead with six bullet wounds. It appears he left one troop to go to another unattended. He was a brave soldier. Fighting again on our right flank. Toppin and Sgt. Baxter wounded.

Canteen arrived.

Aug. 25.

Heard Pole-Carew had taken Belfast with slight opposition. Geluk still.

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Aug. 29.

En route for Belfast. Strathconas have a sharp set-to, and we have two squadrons engaged. Bivouac near Bergendal Farm.

Aug. 27.

The enemy turned to-day, and we have fought a pitched battle and won. It was an infantry and big gun fight. We had our work cut out to keep a small commando from joining the main body. A 15-pounder shelled us all day, but did no damage. Put in a fair amount of rifle practice. D 3 and D 4 bowled over a few of the enemy by splendid volley firing. The infantry having taken the main position, those of the enemy opposing us give way, and our victory is complete.

Aug. 28.

Moving out of camp in pursuit of the foe, we pass their late fortified farm, and saw a most gruesome picture.

About thirty mangled Boers lay among the ruins, a tribute to the awful effect of a lyddite shell in a confined space. Some of the bodies were mere shreds of skin and bone.

The Tommies had stripped the dead ere the last rites were paid; thus the rigid corpses, with contorted features and limbs, made an awful sight. Lieut. Roos, of the Z.A.R.P., lay dead with a bullet between his eyes. Our prisoners say he was a very brave man. Many more bodies lay in the open. The trenches were constructed with the usual skill, and were well hidden.

The ground in the immediate vicinity of the trenches was ploughed by shells, both great and small, while shrapnel bullets were more plentiful than stones. We are told Lord Roberts and staff witnessed the fight

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from the hills beyond Belfast, and when the fight was won heliographed his congratulations to Buller and his army.

Our losses as a whole are slight.

Passing the late field of battle, we proceed by the Machadorp Road, which takes us through a rough and mountainous country. Passing by Dalmanutha Station, we sight a cloud of dust about eight miles away. Instinctively everyone knew it to be the Boer rear guard and convoy. "Gallop!" was the order, and pellmell down into the valley we went. Then C squadron broke away from us, and we saw their object. The Dutchmen were cutting loose the mules from the waggons in rear. On the rapid approach of our men, the enemy relinquished their project, and galloped off, leaving four waggons in our hands. One waggon was full of kits marked U.S.A., and from letters found on same waggon we knew the owners of the kits to be Irish Americans. Many Remington and Winchester rifles were also found upon the captured waggons; also 500 pom-pom shells. While C were examining the waggons, the rest of the regiment pressed on, and soon the familiar "pop-pop" of the Mauser told we had closed with our foes once again. Quickly dismounting, we went forward in open order, lining a ridge immediately in our front, and at right angles to the road. "Advance!" was the next order, and over the ridge we went, not, however, before the pom-pom of the enemy had saluted us with fifteen or sixteen shells as we showed upon the skyline. Halting, we dropped to cover, and poured a few volleys into the enemy, who were scattering, although their 15-pounder had now come into action.

Forward we went, by short rushes and crisp volleys, the enemy retiring equally as fast. The Royal Horse Artillery now came up to give us a hand, and the

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enemy went faster than ever. Strathconas arrived at this juncture, and lined up on our left, and together we rushed the opposite ridge in style. The Dutch gave us a volley as we lay panting on the hill, and then galloped out of range. Our horses were by this time about two miles in our rear, and we had perforce to wait for them to come up. Off again as soon as mounted; we cautiously rode towards Machadorp. As we entered the town, one could plainly see the enemy climbing the road on the further side. To check or delay our advance was now of importance to the hard pressed foe; so they turned a 15-pounder on us, which had the desired effect, we being obliged to wait until our own artillery came up. The long range 12-pounder soon got the Boers on the run again, and ere nightfall we were in possession of the hills above the town.

I have been in hot water all this week, or, perhaps, my troop leader's liver is out of order. To-day another wigging has been my fate. The crime this time was racing a Strathcona patrol to a farm which looked promising from a certain point of view. However, all we got was a volley, which made us take open order in a manner that would have been a revelation to any Field Marshal.

Aug. 29.

Moved out early this morning, working our way along the top of the mountains which border the Elands Valley. The mountain scenery was wild and grand, being admirably adapted to the guerilla style of fighting, which is so dear to the wild and woolly back veldt Boer. However, the fact that Gen. French threatened the Dutch line of retreat was the main cause of our unopposed advance. D squadron were detailed to scout towards Waterval-boven. Ere we had reached the foot of the hills which encircle the

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town, the familiar "pop-pop" of the Mauser was heard all around us. No cover was available, so we galloped straight up to the hills upon the top of which our foemen were lying; then, being under cover, we dismounted and raced up the hill. On reaching the top we found the Dutchmen had fallen back on the town. Eventually we surrounded the town, and sniped at any man who showed himself. One Dutchman, who was galloping along the railway line, 1,800 yards away, was knocked off his horse by a well-directed volley, and the inmates of the house for which he was making promptly put up a white flag. At dusk we returned to the main body, taking with us a flock of sheep. Bivouacked at Helvetia, leaving Gen. French encamped upon our right.

Aug. 30.

One result of our rapid advance is that to-day some 1,500 of our captured fellow-countrymen have been set free.

Third Mounted Brigade, with A battery, Royal Horse Artillery, went sliding and slipping down the mountain track which leads from Helvetia to Waterval-onder, from the top of the mountains to the bottom. It was by far the worst bit of mountaineering we have had so far. The track soon became impracticable for artillery, so A battery were left behind, the rest getting down as best we could, dragging our horses behind us. In the farm houses we passed were several Dutchwomen, who told us "the hills were full of Boers, who would soon beat us back." We encountered next to no opposition, and had the satisfaction of seeing, when four miles off Waterval-onder, our released men walking up the railway line towards French's men. Our object being accomplished, we had nothing else to do but retrace our steps. A British army once "swore horribly in

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Flanders." Well, the 600 odd swearing, sweating Light Horsemen climbing back to camp could have given even the "Flanders Army" points. All's well that ends well, and we got back to camp without a single casualty.

Aug. 31.

We had a well-earned rest to-day. Poor Neve, who was wounded on 23rd inst., died this morning; he was a good comrade and gallant soldier.

Mutton chops and pancakes for dinner.

Sept. 1.

We descend from the mountains and enter the Crocodile Valley. F, who were scouting, had a few shots fired at them. We learn from an English farmer that the Boers are only a few hours in front of us. This is a beautiful valley, well watered, and, for the Transvaal, well cultivated. The mountains enclose it upon all sides, while the swiftly flowing Crocodile river, in the centre, makes irrigation an easy task. The valley is about twenty miles long, by ten to twelve across.

Sept. 2.

Third Mounted Brigade made a reconnaissance to-day, and were complimented by Gen. Buller, who declared it to be the most successful of the campaign. F, C, D squadrons were the first to move off, and all went well until the foothills which wall in the eastern end of the valley were reached; here we found the enemy, also a pom-pom.

Captain Tucker, with D 3 and D 4, took a farm which commanded part of the Lydenburg Road; the remainder of D went scouting towards the hills on the extreme left, while F went towards the left front, A, B, G squadrons being in support. We were advancing in a most leisurely manner, when the Dutch

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opened on us with a brace of "Long Toms," and a single 15-pounder. Their fire was mainly directed on the Royal Horse Artillery and field guns, who, after losing nineteen horses, were obliged to retire. Our 5in. guns tried to get into action, but got into a bog instead, and there stuck; fortunately they were under cover. As for the South African Light Horse, pom-poms and rifles were giving them a lively time, and we took to cover like rabbits. Under cover we had to stay all day. One could not show one's head without three or four shells coming as a warning to keep down.

Sept. 3.

Day in camp. Had a swim. Bought a goose from one of Strathcona's men; he must have carried it a week—it was high.

Sept. 4.

Pickets and patrols. Camp shelled most vigorously to-day.

Bloom, while out on picket, was fired at by a Dutchman, who was not fifty yards distant.

Sept. 5.

Lieut. Dakin, while scouting, was shot in the left hand.

Bivouacked at Badfontein.

Sept. 6.

Ian Hamilton having completed his flank movement, the enemy have evacuated their exceedingly strong position in our front. After a tiring day, searching the hills, we bivouac on a farm lately the Boer headquarters.

As Gen. Buller and Ian Hamilton were passing the latter's camp, Hamilton's men rushed out, and gave "our General" three rousing cheers. Grateful for

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this recognition of our leader, some of us rewarded the "Jocks" with a present of onions, which we had "found."

Sept. 7.

We enter Lydenburg to-day; it is certainly the finest town we have struck.

It is well watered, well wooded, well built, and situated about 6,000 feet above sea-level; it is the centre of the alluvial gold industry. The regiment halted just outside the town, near to the water turbine mill. After a good bath, which we sorely needed, we passed through the town, which the retiring enemy were shelling.

We camped on the open veldt close to the river, and at right angles to the Pilgrim's Road.

We had scarcely off-saddled before the enemy, having ceased shelling the town, turned their attention to us, and as fast as they could lay their guns, sent shell after shell among our saddles. Our 5in. guns replied, but soon ceased fire, being completely outclassed by the guns "made in France." Quite thirty 94lb. shells fell among us; but we had no losses.

Sept. 8.

We had a stiff little fight to-day; lost a good few men, but took the Dutch position.

We were saddled up ere dawn broke; at the first glimpse of light we stood to our horses. A dense fog crowned the summit of the Mauchberg, whereon the Boer Long Toms were posted. We waited patiently for it to lift, as we should then know if the enemy meant standing his ground. We waited a good half hour, then it lifted suddenly, and we saw the guns still in position. "Sections left!" was the order, and slowly we marched from our late bivouac. Scarcely

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had we gone ten yards when a white cloud encircled the Dutch guns. In thirty seconds more a 94lb. shell came whistling among us. Again and again they laid their Creusot on us, the while we were slowly walking out of range, or, rather, out of sight. Out of sight at last, and no one hit. At the trot we took up our position, the extreme left. On gaining higher ground we halted, to give the infantry time to get into line. From our vantage ground one could see our gallant battalions come steadily into action. The Devons led, open order, column of companies; the Boers shelled them rapidly, yet I saw none fall. Next came the Gordons, close order, column of companies. The third shell placed fifteen of the Volunteer Company hors de combat. Then their Colonel permitted them to open out.

Thus the fight commenced. Then our turn came. About three miles to our left was a large kopje, whose summit terminated in two cones. D 1 and one troop of A were sent to take and hold it.

We went as fast as the nature of the ground would permit, it being very rocky and full of bush. A, on our left, were soon engaged; but, pressing forward, they occupied a stone kraal, which enabled D 1 to go forward faster and in greater security. We went over the crest of the rise, and met—a volley. Back we went and dismounted. Ten of us went forward with Lieut. Johnson; the remainder, under Sgt. Taylor, rushed the kopje. Going on, we saw the enemy making towards the kopje. It was now a question as to who would get to the top of the hill first. We were not long left in doubt. Taylor and his men did the trick, and, lying down, began firing as though they had the regiment at their back. Quick as thought we were doubling to support them, and soon another ten rifles were in action. Supports came up shortly

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after, and the Dutch gradually withdrew into the bush, whence, when anyone showed himself, came the "pop-pop" of the Mauser.

The roar and rattle of a fight was raging in the centre, telling that our Infantry were engaged. After a couple of hours it slackened, and word came that the position had been won. Dusk coming on, we were withdrawn, and bivouacked on the Spitzkop road, half way up the Mauchberg.

Dark and weird tales are told of certain Strathconas and Light Horsemen who cast evil eyes upon the wine shops of Lydenberg. Their deeds and their punishment, are they not written in the books of the Provost Marshal? Sixteen Light Horsemen and twenty-four Strathconas are in limbo, all for looking upon the wine when 'twas red.

Sept. 9.

Close up with the enemy again. Their rear guard turned, and made a stubborn resistance; but the Devons, King's Royal Rifles, and Gordons took no denial, and went rapidly on. Artillery was engaged again; the opposing pom-poms have a little duel "on their own." About three o'clock we heard tremendous cheering on our right, and saw the Tommies running for all they were worth towards the crest of a hill over which ran the road. Getting nearer, one could hear but one word amid the cheers, firing of maxims and rifles. It was "Convoy! Convoy! Convoy!" In an instant our men had caught the fever of excitement, and, without waiting for the word, galloped towards the yelling soldiers. This is what met their gaze. The whole of the Boer army and convoy lay but a short four miles away, in the valley at our very feet. No wonder we were excited. For forty days we had chased and fought that army; now it seemed we had them at last. I have said we saw them in the

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valley. They were below us, it is true, but, strictly speaking, they were upon the crest of a range which ran parallel to the mountains we were upon. The road down to the lower range was very steep; but down this we galloped. Twenty feet above us half a dozen maxims added to the din created by excited Tommies and artillerymen. A precipice was on our left, a wall of rock upon our right; but, heedless of all danger, men and horses, equally excited, went headlong after the fleeing Dutchmen. My Captain's hat blew off at this juncture, and I was sent back for it. Back I went as soon as a block enabled me to rein up my pony, only to find one of our men had already taken the hat on. It being impossible to rejoin my troop, I remained a spectator of what followed.

Behind the Light Horse a confused mass of Colt guns, Strathcona's Horse, Composites and Guides went madly down the narrow way, one and all being intent on looting the enemy's waggons.

Meanwhile the Boers were making every effort to get their transport away. With our glasses we could plainly see Louis Botha on his white horse urging his artillerymen to bring their guns into action once more. We saw the drivers of the waggon teams lashing their mules, in order to get away as quickly as possible from our guns, which every moment might open fire upon them. Suddenly, from the bottom of the steep mountain road down which the mounted men had gone, came the rattle of rifles, and the deeper roar of a pom-pom; then the sullen boom of a 15-pounder.

Everyone knew what it meant; the Dutch rearguard had checked the Light Horse rush. Our long range guns never got into action, and so at dusk the Light Horse reluctantly came back, leaving Strathcona's to carry on the fight at dawn.

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Behrens, of D squadron, was the only Light Horseman hit; severely in shoulder.

Sept. 10.

Strathconas and the long range 12-pounder had the fight to themselves to-day. Eventually our guns dislodged the enemy from Long Tom Hill, Strathconas going in pursuit. Main body descended the mountain and encamped upon the Devil's Knuckles.

Sept. 11.

We have captured thirteen waggons full of various stores. Our horses are completely knocked up; we lost twenty-nine to-day through sheer exhaustion. The infantry are continuing the pursuit, and have captured some prisoners.

Sept. 12.

Devil's Knuckles camp. Have been asleep all day. We are upon less than half ration now.

Sept. 13.

Taylor went out buck shooting with Captain Tucker. Brought back Klein Jan, a Zulu boy, with him. Klein Jan is willing to work for us, we giving him the princely salary of five shillings per month.

Sept. 14.

Another shooting excursion arranged. D 4 bring in two springbok. Rumours of disbandment are in the air. We were served out with raw coffee berries to-day, so that everyone has been roasting and grinding for the coming march. Buller and the infantry and Strathconas are still after the Boers. They have captured 2,000 bags of flour.

Sept. 17.

We leave Devil's Knuckles, and cross the Sabie; D 1 are rear guard. We arrive at Spitzkop at 12.30 a.m. Our waggons got upset crossing the Spruit. Dine upon cookies and boiled rice, with sugar ad lib.

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Sept. 18.

I leave Spitzkop with two men and a Scotch cart for the Glynn gold mine. We are to bring back provisions for the officers and ourselves.

The Boers had a repair armoury here, also a large quantity of sugar, flour, rice, and meal. First rain fell last night, and we, in consequence, are soaked to the skin. Our men, cum Strathconas, are working the mine, power being supplied by the water turbine. C squadron remain here on duty, lucky dogs!

Sept. 19, 20.

Returned to squadron to-day. Scotch cart filled with all sorts of good things, chipped beef, chutney, kippered herrings, curry powder, sweets, and tobacco. On arriving in camp was immediately sent, with six men, on picket duty four miles east of the Grass Kop mine, where Sgt. Taylor and six men were already stationed.

About 5 p.m. word came that blankets had been sent to the mine, and that we were to stay there until Strathconas relieved us. Two niggers were left in charge of the house, who cooked a sheep and some fowls for us. We had out the tablecloths, plate, crockery, &c., and went in for a regular feast. On retiring to rest, Taylor and I occupied a very springy spring mattress. We were awakened at 2 p.m. by a rifle shot from our sentry, who declared he had seen something resembling two men on the skyline in his front. Hearing nothing, we went to sleep again. At 10 a.m. Strathconas arrived and took charge. During their tenure of office the plate vanished, although it had been duly buried after our revelry.

Sept. 21, 22.

Back to Spitzkop again. Break in several good remounts we have commandeered.

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Sept. 23.

Leave Spitzkop and move towards Pilgrim's Rest, where the Dutchmen are going to make one more stand. All quiet.

Sept. 24.

Rejoined the regiment to-day, and bivouacked on the banks of the Sabie River. Made some truly excellent flap-jacks. Klein Jan was greatly interested in the making thereof.

Some of our squadron are still absent upon convoy duty at Nel Spruit, where, we are told, are Roberts, Kitchener, French, and Pole-Carew.

Sept. 26.

Move towards Pilgrim's Rest viâ the Mac-Mac diggings. All the country side is cut and scoured by prospectors' trenches and drives. Infantry have had a slight skirmish with enemy, and our 12-pounder has fired a few shells. We are among the mountains once more, and the pleasant Sabie valley is a thing of the past. We bivouac six miles from Pilgrim's Rest.

Sept. 27.

Climbed the mountains overlooking Pilgrim's Rest. On reaching the crest of the range, we saw, far away to our right, on the Kruger's Post and Origstadt Road, clouds of dust, which told us the enemy were flying still. Strathconas entered Pilgrim's Rest, and exchanged shots with the Dutch rear guard.

Sept. 28.

I had thought that we had seen the worst of our mountaineering when we released the prisoners from Waterval-onder; but we have fairly capped that climb to-day. C started about 2.30, the rest of us saddling up at daylight. Retracing our steps for about two miles, we followed C up the berg. The first mile was

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easy, as there was plenty of open ground; but ere long we got into a regular forest, the trees being so thick as to exclude all sunlight. Our path, about two feet in width, lay in the centre of the forest, and seemed to get steeper and more intricate the further we advanced. Through breaks in the foliage one could see the mountain crests towering high above us, clothed with trees. Below us, the roar and rush of water told of a swift mountain torrent, while an occasional stone dislodged by our horses leapt and bounded down the mountain side, until a faint splash denoted it had found a resting place in the torrent bed. Two-thirds of our climb had been completed, when, far up the mountain, rifle shots were heard. Word was pased back from man to man—we could only advance in Indian file—that C squadron were at the top, and had surprised the enemy, who had fallen back. I think a sigh of relief went up from all of us; indeed, Macaulay's lines had been singing in my head during our climb: "In yon strait path a thousand may well be stopped by three." Certainly, twenty resolute Dutchmen, had they stood their ground, would have played Old Harry with our Brigade.

We got to the top of the mountain about ten o'clock, and, after a short spell, mounted and galloped towards the Lydenburg Road, which we reached in time to give C a hand to polish off what remained of the Dutchmen. Pickets were then told off, and the remainder sat down to wait for the main body, who were coming up by the ordinary road, which our sucessful flanking movement had rendered secure. Zulus with us have found immense numbers of sheep and goats hidden in the recesses of the mountain.

Sept. 29.

Main column join us to-day. The bullocks and mules had a rare task to get the waggons up. They

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are incapable of going further, so we stay here another day.

Sept. 30.

Sunday parade.

The scenery here is wild and beautiful. We go out and bring in sheep galore.

We are 8,000 feet above sea-level.

Oct. 1.

Left camp early this morning, South African Light Horse being the advanced guard of Third Mounted Brigade. Our destination was Kruger's Post, the country in the immediate vicinity probably being the most mountainous in all Africa.

The road lay through a well irrigated valley, through which we advanced without opposition. About mid-day we came upon the few houses comprising the hamlet, and were promptly fired upon, the enemy being concealed on the slopes of the bush-clad hills which encircled the hamlet. The Provost Marshal with his men, who, on the houses being sighted had taken possession, came back at a gallop, amid the derisive cheers of Strathconas, Light Horse, and A battery. The latter, quickly getting into action, shelled the adjacent hills promiscuously, but with good effect.

At this juncture word came that the Second Cavalry Brigade, under Gen. Brocklehurst, were in possession of the hills immediately commanding the Lydenburg road. Leaving the rear guard to take care of the enemy already located, we pushed on, and soon saw on the hills in our front English guns and men. Pushing forward, we rode for another five miles, when we reached Erasmus's farm, where we were greeted by all the women-folk in the vicinity, also by the word "WELKOM," painted upon a large strip of calico,

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We camped down about 2 p.m., and, off-saddling, turned our horses out to graze.

About 4 p.m., when we were cooking and chatting merrily, for this was to be the last march for the old hands, there was a sudden report, and a 94lb. shell whistled over our heads. The customary Light Horse cheer, which always announces the arrival or departure of a shell, was at once raised, then everyone got up to locate the gun.

In ten minutes a dozen shells had come into our camp. Then an order came to "Saddle up!" countermanded immediately by "Everyone leave camp!" Keeping within sound of the R.S.M.'s whistle, everyone took cover, and prepared, each according to his temperament, to watch the fireworks. Pretty, indeed, was the shooting made by the Boer artillerymen. Each regiment was visited in turn, but the South African Light Horse, being in the centre, came in for considerably more than their share.

When dusk came on the cannonade ceased, and we left camp to bring in our horses. Soon fires gleaming in our lines announced that the suspended cooking was being resumed. The two hours' one-sided shelling had cost us twelve good men in killed and wounded. Sad, also laughter-moving, incidents of the late bombardment were being discussed around each fire, when —flash! bang! and the enemy recommenced. The scene which ensued was one which those present will never forget. It was the first time we had been shelled at night. Men who had fought bravely in fifty fights and skirmishes by day, became for three minutes demoralised by the bursting of shrapnel and time shells in the darkness. Soon, high above all the din, rang out the voices of our officers, "Saddle up!" the N.C.O.'s well seconding them. Something to do, a definite order, and the Light Horse ranks bore their

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wonted aspect. "Mount! Sections right! Walk! March!" and we marched slowly away to a more sheltered bivouac. Personally, I never was so frightened in my life, until the necessity of looking after my troop dawned upon me; then I was myself again.

Oct. 2.

We learned this morning that last night, after the shelling had ceased, the Guides cum the Second Cavalry Brigade tried to capture the guns, but arrived too late. The Second Cavalry Brigade say they had been scouting in the direction of the guns previous to our arrival, but—God bless the Second Cavalry Brigade and their leader.

Reached Lydenburg at 11 a.m. to-day. The garrison whom we left here on September 9 have strongly entrenched themselves, and will take a lot of turning out. Latest "bush wire" is, that we stay here a few days to refit, then "Roll on England."

Oct. 3.

Rain all day. Have been in charge of grazing guard, consequently am soaked through. Our bivouac presents a curious sight; blankets, great-coats, waggon sails, corrugated iron, &c., have been requisitioned for the purpose of obtaining shelter. Fires are at a premium. Cookies and other delicacies are selling at fabulous prices. Robinson, who was wounded at Kruger's Post, died to-day, and was buried in the cemetery here.

Oct. 4.

Walked round the cemetery. One headstone bears a curious inscription. "To the memory of ——, who was murdered by the Boers in '81. He took no part in the hostilities." The word "murdered" has been almost defaced, presumably by the enemy.

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Oct. 5.

We start our homeward march to-day. The South African Light Horse have the proud privilege of escorting Gen. Buller and staff. The garrison lined up as we left the town, and cheered themselves hoarse as "our General" passed. The South African Light Horse were subject to much good-humoured chaff from the Tommies remaining behind. Said one: "No more poultry pickets for us." Another shouted: "Good bye, Light Horse. Where did you bury the champagne?"

Passing the Inniskillings, who were guarding the head of the Crocodile valley, we descended once again from the mountains, and bivouacked at Badfontein. P——, who was a trifle "full," got a nasty fall, and was placed in the ambulance.

Oct. 6.

Helvetia bivouac. After an uneventful march through the Crocodile valley, we again ascend the hills and camp here. The squadron were in turn examined as to their "bill of health"; an almost clean bill was returned. Gusty rain all day.

Oct. 8.

Reach Machadorp to-day. We halted in line of squadrons, then, dismounting, we formed a square to hear Sir Redvers's farewell. He said: "Colonel Byng, officers, N.C.O.'s, and men of the South African Light Horse. I have received orders to go back to Natal, to break up the Natal Field Force; therefore you will be no longer under my command. During the ten months you have been in the field your behaviour has been magnificent; you have been in constant touch with the enemy. You came forward at a time when, as far as this country is concerned, England had most need of you. You have lost many gallant com-

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rades, which in a war of this character must occur. I sincerely trust that all prosperity may be yours in the future, in a country of peace, to recompense you for your past labours. I wish you all good luck. Good-bye."

After our gallant General's words, there followed a scene which no one who was present will ever forget. After three frantic cheers had been given, "Auld Lang Syne" was sung; then the Light Horse, breaking their ranks, surged round Sir Redvers, alternately cheering, singing, and in some cases almost crying. An attempt was made to get the General off his horse and carry him shoulder high to the station; but the staff laughingly intervened, and Sir Redvers escaped. We then returned to our horses, and bivouacked with the rest of the Third Mounted Brigade. Those of our regiment who had volunteered for the Transvaal Police left to-night; the remainder handed in all our horses to the remount people.

Oct. 9.

The Volunteers for the Imperial Military Railways paraded and were entrained, most of them going to Waterval-boven.

Approaching disbandment has the effect of making everyone cheerful.

Oct. 11.

Left Machadodorp for Pretoria. Stopped for the night at Belfast. Alarming tales are current of train-wrecking, sniping, &c.

Oct. 12.

Arrived in Pretoria about 5 p.m. Marched through the streets in the dusk. After many wanderings reached "Arcadia," where we camped.

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Oct. 13.

Had a turn in Pretoria. Town is well laid out, houses well built, many having beautiful grounds. Kirk Street is quite worthy of any English city. Palace of Justice, Artillery Barracks are very fine buildings. Lunch at the Polar Hotel, and dine at Union Club Hotel, both places being packed with more or less noisy Light Horsemen. Went to the baths, and managed, by the aid of "shower, hot and swimming," to get some of the dirt off. Bought some shirts, &c. After nightfall buried my underclothing, which I had worn since August 12. Beginning to feel less "crummy."

Oct. 14.

Sunday. Went to baths and had another luxurious swim. "I took my bath, an' I wallered; for, Gawd, I needed it so!" The railway and police volunteers returned to the regiment to-day, the Military Authorities having broken faith with them. One would have thought seasoned men were wanted, regarding the present state of the country.

Oct. 15,

Field-Marshal Baron Roberts of Kandahar spoke to us to-day. The speech was heard in silence.

Oct. 16.

Paid off. "There'll be a hot time in the old town to-night." Colonel asked us not to make the pace too strong. Good old Byng!

Oct. 17.

The Union Club Hotel was a miniature pandemonium last night, Brabant's, Imperial and South African Light Horse making things "hum." "I've a head like a concertina. I've a tongue like a button-stick."

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The old hands left Pretoria en route for Cape Town. Colonel and his officers came down to the station to see us off.

As the train moved out, Colonel Byng, with tears in his eyes, shook hands with nearly all of us, and we gave him a cheer he'll remember all his life. Stopped the night at Elandsfontein Junction, where we slept on the platform in the waiting rooms. In fact, Light Horsemen were anywhere and everywhere.

Oct. 18.

Train left at 7 a.m. Last night was a night of broken sleep, our want of blankets being greatly felt. We are also utterly defenceless, our rifles and bandoliers having been taken from us before we left Pretoria. Much friction appears to exist on this side between Colonials and Imperial officers; the latter have apparently a large supply of that valuable British commodity, red tape, still on hand.

Much burnt rolling stock is to be seen on either side of the line. De Wet had evidently been busy round here. Burnt farms showed that our troops retaliated. We bivouac at Kopjes Station.

Oct. 19.

Passed Brandfort, which struck me as being a rather nice town. No rations having been issued, we are obliged to buy bread here. There are coppers here which are supposed to have boiling water ready for passing troops; we gave the nigger in charge a hiding, from which other troops may possibly benefit. Stop at Bethany. The commandant expected an attack, which, luckily for us, being unarmed, did not come off.

Oct. 20, 21.

Had a drink and a shave in Bloemfontein, where we stayed for five hours.

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The country through which we are passing is one monotonous dead level, here and there relieved by a lonely kopje or low-lying hills.

Our progress is slow, as the Boers are in our immediate neighbourhood. Line has been blown up east of Springfontein. Camped at Naauw Poort. Had a bath at Norvals Pont, where we were able to get something to eat—paying through the nose for it.

Oct. 22.

Travelling all last night, and made good progress. Run was 160 miles when we halted at Reitfontein. The country here is getting more mountainous; similar to Northern Natal, only not so fertile. We made a long halt at Laingburg.

Oct. 23.

Passed during the day the beautiful Exe Valley, which is a bit of magnificent scenery. The crests of the mountains are crowned with snow. We pass Worcester, which, our driver tells us, is still a hot-bed of outspoken race-hatred.

Oct. 24.

We arrive in Cape Town at 8 a.m.

We are told we can have free civilian clothes on going to the depot. We went; the first man who came out as a "civilian" sent the rest of us scampering back to town. He was an awful guy. Sgt. Haines and myself take our passage by R.M.S. Dunvegan Castle. We have Gen. Buller on board and his staff. There was much cheering, salutes, and blowing of sirens as we steamed out of Table Bay homeward bound.

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"Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them:
Nought shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true."

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